

# Librarians' Advocate

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## PERB Hearings Close: AFT Seeks Librarian Unit

Hearings on the AFT-proposed bargaining unit for UC's 600 librarians have ended with the submission of final briefs to the Public Employment Relations Board, which is expected to render a decision sometime this Spring.

The AFT unit includes all non-supervisory librarians, that is, all those in the Assistant, Associate and full Librarian ranks, excluding AULs and ULs. AFT attorney Robert J. Bezemek argued that librarians should have a separate unit because of their strong community of interest, as demonstrated in their peer review procedures and Senate-like organization, LAUC, both of which are unique among non-Senate academics. He also pointed to librarians' 17-year history of AFT representation at the University.

Without consulting UC's librarians, Universitywide administration and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees proposed placing librarians in a large, heterogeneous statewide "professional" unit, consisting of some 20,000 academic and non-academic (!) employees. The AFT attorney countered that librarians rarely or never work with and share no common interests with staff professionals and other academics. He pointed out that UC's own rules draw a sharp line between academic and staff employees who have separate personnel offices and policy manuals. Most important said Bezemek was the fact that librarians' concerns would be submerged in this large, amorphous grouping.

The California State Employees Association argued both sides of the issue. On the one hand, CSEA asked for a separate librarian unit identical to the AFT's. At the same time it called for a large "professional" unit similar to the administration's and AFSCME's, but minus librarians.

Unlike other CSEA-proposed units, the librarian case was argued not by CSEA staff, but by independent consultant David Novogrodsky. Novogrodsky presented a solid case for a librarian unit, but could do so only by directly contradicting the CSEA staff's "professional" unit argument. For example, Novogrodsky stressed librarians'

strong community of interest, while the CSEA staff said, "the intent of the [Collective Bargaining] act can best be served if primary consideration is given to broad communities of interest and that individual distinctions between professionals and occupational groups are minimized." Novogrodsky calls attention to the sharp distinction between academics and non-academics, a point lost on CSEA staff who make the peculiar claim that the employees in its proposed professional unit are "not to be confused as academic."

While officially supporting a separate librarian unit, it is difficult to see how librarians could logically be excluded from CSEA's all-encompassing professional unit, which lumps together such "functionally related" academic and staff occupations as Lecturer, Recreation Supervisor, Coder, Counseling Attorney, Orthopedist, Printing Estimator, Examining Physician, Physical Plant Scheduler, Dietitian, Ceramic Engineer, Rotating Research Professor, Band Master and Diving Officer.

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# Closing the UCSB Campus

UCSB UC-AFT librarians and faculty met with campus Personnel Manager, Robert Cameron in early December to discuss the negative impacts upon programs and personnel of the UCSB campus closing, Dec. 29-31.

Officials claimed the closure was necessary to save energy and utility and other costs. However, a few essential research facilities, such as the university library (a heavy energy user) would remain open.

The Proposition 9 contingency task force that had recommended this action was originally set up to propose cuts if Prop. 9 were to pass. Since that did not happen, these recommendations obviously were not appropriate for this situation.

Personnel who most immediately perceived and felt the impact of this closure were staff and librarians; faculty do not normally teach on these days. Staff and librarians were told to "use earned or anticipated vacation time, or leave without pay during this three day period." Some were forced to use hard-earned vacation leave; some considered it a forced lay-off. Those three days of vacation leave could not be used at another time which some employees may have preferred, such as during the summer.

A major question left unresolved is the issue voiced by UC-AFT regarding the lack of employee input and consultation in the process which resulted in the closure.

It was recognized by many that the principle of MANDATED use of vacation or leave without pay could produce serious personal hardships. The question of equity is significant--librarians were to be penalized while faculty would not.

The serious question arises: if this action is considered precedent-setting for all campuses (not just UCSB), eventually will all vacation time be scheduled under administrative mandate?

# Santa Cruz Faculty Vote For Collective Bargaining

With strong support from AFT members, Senate faculty at Santa Cruz have voted to be represented by a collective bargaining agent. In the precedent-setting vote, 55% chose the Santa Cruz Faculty Association as their representative. Santa Cruz is the first campus in the UC system to see a faculty bargaining agent. It is also the first instance in which faculty members at an institution of UC's quality have opted to bargain collectively. Earlier elections saw CB rejected by narrow margins at UCB and UCLA.

Unlike the faculty, librarians and most other UC employees are still waiting for the Public Employment Relations Board to decide the composition of their units and to call elections.

## Legislative News

The California AFL-CIO is backing a measure requiring the state to consider "comparable worth" in determining salaries. AB 129 (Lockyer) would help correct sexually discriminatory salaries paid UC librarians.



The AFT is asking the state for "split rate property tax rolls: a higher rate for commercial property than for residential property.

The Union has endorsed AB 252 (Keene) which would require the Regents to conduct more of their meetings in public.

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